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CIA Tried to Use Georgetown Medical Center in 1950s

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The Central Intelligence Agency in the 1950s sought to use Georgetown University Medical Center to hide "a cover organization for highly sensitive projects" in "biological, chemical and radiological warfare," it was learned yesterday.

Top secret CIA documents made available to The Washington Post disclosed this purpose without mentioning any university's name. They spoke, too, of plans for research in "psychochemical fields," "natural toxic psychosis" and "what makes people pass from mild disorientation into delirium and coma" — all fields that fit at that time into the CIA's aim to investigate mind control.

An informed source said these and other documents referring to "research on terminally ill cancer patients" pertained at least in part to CIA aims at Georgetown University here.

The documents provided some of the first specifics on CIA goals at Georgetown since the disclosure last week that in the mid-1950s the CIA channeled funds through the Geschickter Foundation — a foundation directed by a Georgetown professor — to establish a secret base for sensitive studies.

Dr. Matthew F. McNulty, head of the Georgetown University Medical Center, yesterday said nearly two weeks of research and interviews have turned up no evidence that any research ever was done on medical center premises on the CIA's behalf or with hidden CIA financing.

But he also conceded that he is still far from completely informed or sure of what happened there in the 1950s and '60s.

The evidence, he said, is that the CIA indeed tried to establish a secret mind-control research center at the university.

And he called this "an abuse of an institution's integrity and independ-

ence of operation and decision making."

"They didn't approach us above board or by open declaration," he said. "They apparently utilized foundations and institutions of repute and through them obtained the services of scientists, but never with any disclosure to the institutional leadership responsible for the conscience and ethics of Georgetown and other universities."

He said he probably never will be fully informed about events of 15 and 20 years ago, long before his arrival here in 1969.

In part, he said, this is because several officials of that day are dead and in part because the university destroys most research files after 7 to 10 years, to save space.

In addition, he said, the university still has been unable to reach Dr. Charles Geschickter, the reported middleman in an apparent 1957 CIA-Geschickter-Georgetown transaction.

Geschickter was a distinguished pathologist and cancer researcher and — largely in a private medical practice not on Georgetown premises — a doctor who treated cancer patients.

Until the late 1960s he was also the medical center's director of clinical (medical treatment) laboratories, one of any hospital's most important units. A 1959 university publication called him the head of "one of the most prolific cancer research laboratories in the country," and a man whose "fertile mind knows no limits."

He became emeritus in 1971, but still retains a small office and laboratory in the medical center's Gorman Building, the last of a connected string of buildings comprising Georgetown University Hospital.

Geschickter is now 76. Georgetown professors say they have seen him very little in the last few years.

McNulty said he can be sure, from the testimony of present CIA Director Stansfield Turner, that the CIA gave the Geschickter Foundation \$375,000 to make use of some universi-

ty's facilities without the university's knowledge.

The foundation then openly gave Georgetown University its "gift" of \$375,000 at the time the school was putting up three new buildings — a dormitory, a nursing school and the Gorman Building.

The \$3,035,000 Gorman Building was to house Geschickter's new clinical laboratories, as well as offices and facilities for several other departments. McNulty said remaining university records fail to show exactly which building the \$375,000 helped build but it was apparently Gorman, which was begun in 1957 and dedicated in March 1959.

McNulty, Dr. John Gillespie, a former Geschickter colleague and other sources agreed that Geschickter saw few patients at his Gorman laboratories. "He didn't even have an examination room there," Gillespie said.

McNulty maintained that: "I've interviewed all the people who worked with him, and they say all his interests were in cancer therapy. I've talked to technicians who worked next to him at the laboratory bench, where it would be almost impossible to conceal anything, and they saw nothing of the subjects described by the CIA."

As a private medical practitioner, Geschickter maintained an office on Connecticut Avenue, near the Washington Hilton Hotel.

"He mostly treated cancer or unusual diseases with unusual treatments," Gillespie said. "He had a lot of patients, and a lot of them were very grateful."

"He is a very bright and very generous man. He is a very responsible man. I'd like to see him come forward now."

Geschickter has been out of reach for the past two weeks, since reporters began phoning him to ask questions. He lives in Lorton, where family members have regularly been saying, "He's out of town. We don't know when he'll be back."